



Agco Launches Touch-Screen GPS

ATLANTA, Ga. — If you can point and touch, you can use Fieldstar.

That's because Fieldstar, the new GPS precision farming system from Agco, features an exclusive touch-screen command center that displays vital yield data and combine performance with just the tap of a finger.

Called the DataTouch command center, it will be available as a part of Fieldstar in Agco brand combines, including all rotary and conventional models of Gleaner and Massey Ferguson, starting in January 1998.

"We believe Fieldstar is the most user-friendly GPS package out there," said Jerry Weaver, general marketing manager, Fieldstar™ at Agco. "Our engineers have created a central control unit that records and displays all key harvest functions involved in GPS-farming just by tapping the screen.

"In field tests this fall, farmers loved the way it worked," he said. "Now they have GPS data right at their fingertips."

In addition to the touch-screen display, Fieldstar includes a yield sensor mounted in the clean grain elevator, a moisture sensor that continually samples grain flow at the grain bin loading tube, a DGPS receiver and antenna mounted on the cab, and a communications unit installed out of sight to reduce cab clutter.

A dot matrix printer is also available for installation in the cab to provide on-the-go printouts in hard copy format.

The office support package includes two data transfer cards, a data card reader and windows-compatible mapping software. The mapping software is programmed to transfer field data to color yield maps, bar graphs, pie charts, and individual field profit maps. Each data card is about the size of a credit card and holds 30 hours of harvest information for easy downloading to the farm office computer.

Minimum computer requirements for Fieldstar are a 486 DX2, or higher, computer using Windows 3.1 or Windows 95 with 8 meg RAM, or higher, 20 meg of hard drive space and a color monitor VGA. A tape drive backup is also recommended. Agco offers two satellite signal correction options—differential

radio beacons and satellite differential. Differential radio beacons, operated by the U.S. Coast Guard and Army Corps of Engineers, is a free service buy only covers farm land near coastlines and navigable waterways. The satellite differential option covers every acre of North America but has a subscription fee.

"The DataTouch screen displays information in bar graph format" noted Weaver. "It's also very easy to customize the order in which combine functions and crop data are displayed to meet operators' preference."

Three screens can be accessed with a tap of the finger, Weaver noted. The transport screen indicates ground speed, local time and GPS status. The main menu screen is used to set up daily harvest programs, and covers combine settings, crop settings and system diagnostics. The harvest screen reports yield, yield dry, moisture, crop temperature, elevator speed and also ground speed.

Data can be summarized by trip, field and job categories, including acres per hour and bushels per hour. Yield, moisture, and capacity graphs are also sub-divided into current and average readings.

Yield and moisture sensors constantly relay information to the communications unit which acts as the brain of Fieldstar. It combines harvest data with GPS location signals and passes it to the DataTouch center for in-cab display and logging onto the data card.

A forerunner to Agco's present Fieldstar system has been commercially used in Europe in Massey Ferguson combines since 1992. "This experience, along with extensive field testing in the U.S., has played a major role in the development of a total GPS package that's designed to work together and is easy for producers to use," Weaver said.

Agco plans to expand portions of Fieldstar to its White planter brand, which introduced the first variable rate seed drive in 1996. This technology permits farmers who operate selected models of White planters to manually adjust seed populations on-the-go from the tractor cab. The DataTouch unit of Fieldstar has been designed to go from combine to tractor for use in future variable rate applications like these.

New Belt Feeders For Lengths Up To 200 Feet

POUND, Wis. — The new Patz Model 1208 Feeder uses a 12-inch belt and deep-trough, open-center pan sections for feeding up to 1,000 pounds per minute. The Model 1608 Feeder uses a 16-inch belt for feeding up to

1,690 pounds per minute.

Economical single-motor drive can feed one or two lots with the bunk split lengthwise. One motor drives both the feed-carrying belt and the continuous-loop, cable-driven plow.

Vermeer Goes 'Square' Baling

PELLA, Iowa — Vermeer has introduced their first entry into the "big square" bale market.

The new Vermeer CommandRAM harvests up to 45 tons of hay per hour. It creates an ideal bale size, in dimension and weight, for economical handling and hauling. The solid 38-inch x 46-inch six-tie packages (which can weigh up to 1,600 pounds) enable operators with standard flatbed trucks to transport 33 percent more "big squares" (versus the 4-foot x 4-foot packages). They also provide a more stable foundation for uniform stacking and storage.

CommandRAM features a unique, state-of-the-art hydraulic plunger drive system which compresses the hay in the chamber only "on command" — when the chamber is full. In addition to improving hay distribution during the plunging process and producing more uniform and consistent slices for feeding, the hydraulic drive system sharply reduces annual repair, maintenance and equipment replacement costs by using fewer moving parts, eliminating high-wear plunger chains,



The new Vermeer CommandRAM harvests up to 45 tons of hay per hour. It creates an ideal bale size, in dimension and weight, for economical handling and hauling.

sprockets, gears and gearboxes.

"The simpler, hydraulic drive is designed to decrease downtime when the hay's ready and increase production over an entire season," according to Al Van Dyke, sales manager of Vermeer's Ag Division. "The reversible hydraulic drive feed system, operated from the tractor seat, can save hours of hand work unplugging a baler. Hydraulic relief valves eliminate time spent replacing shear bolts. Basic maintenance and service re-

quirements are significantly reduced.

"And daily maintenance and service takes just minutes. A remote control system simplifies service work by diagnosing necessary adjustments for knotters, forks and plunger. Side shields also swing out for easy access," Van Dyke said.

The hydraulic drive is gentler on hay than gear-driven units. It flows freely from the windrow through the feed chute directly to the bale chamber, without use of a precompression chamber. The hydraulically-driven plunger operates only when the chamber is fully charged. As a result, producers experience predictable, uniform bale flakes — 17 to 22 per 8-foot bale; gentler handling of alfalfa and other fragile legume-type crops; plus, easier feeding (since the bales break apart more readily and controllably).

Uniform bale lengths and densities are simple to manage in varying crop conditions, from alfalfa to haylage.

Hydraulic Drive Allows Decks to 'Float'

MOLINE, Ill. — Featuring 11 feet of cutting width, the John Deere WF1655 wide-area front mower grooms large open areas in half the time of traditional 72-inch mowers to reduce labor costs.

With its three-deck mower setup (one front and two wing mowers), operators can also count on smooth power from the hydraulic drive system. This system allows the decks to float and follow ground contour without belts or shafts restricting movement.

The 51-hp WF1655 is equipped with a clean-burning overhead-valve Yanmar diesel engine for ample power.

Increased flexibility results in higher productivity for commercial grounds care technicians, sports-turf managers and

golf course superintendents. The WF1655's mower decks operate independently, allowing operators to raise a wing mower to pass by a tree or mow a tight area. The wing decks also turn off and on automatically when raised and lowered.

The WF1655 delivers strong torque with miserly fuel economy, and provides high visibility with extra trimming ability in an overall well-balanced machine.

When mowing hillsides or slippery areas, extra traction is available by engaging the WF1655's full-time or on-demand four-wheel drive and differential lock. Additional features include folding wing decks for transport, increased side-to-side operator visibility, and a tilting steering column for added comfort and operating ease.



Featuring 11 feet of cutting width, the John Deere WF1655 wide-area front mower grooms large open areas in half the time of traditional 72-inch mowers to reduce time and labor costs.

Satellite Link Used To Introduce Weed Control Technology

CHICAGO, Ill. — Two of the latest discoveries in weed control were introduced to American farmers recently by way of another new technology: direct-satellite-link television.

American Cyanamid used the studios of Channel Earth (channel 283 on the DirecTV service) to present via satellite information about Raptor™ herbicide for soybeans and Lightning™ herbicide for IMI-corn® hybrids.

Raptor is the newest member of the imidazolinone family of herbicides. "It offers broad-spectrum contact and residual control of

more than 50 broadleaf and grass weeds, plus rotational flexibility that's unmatched by any other postemergence contact and residual herbicide," said Pat Campbell, vice president of marketing at American Cyanamid.

Lightning is the newest herbicide for use on IMI-Corn hybrids, which have been specially bred to tolerate imidazolinone herbicides. "Lightning is an imidazolinone herbicide applied postemergence that provides contact and residual control of most grasses and broadleaves," Campbell said. "That includes foxtails, crabgrass, woolly

cupgrass, wild proso millet, velvetleaf, cocklebur and lambquarters.

"These new products demonstrate the American Cyanamid commitment to bringing growers the best crop protection solutions. Modern technology has to offer," Campbell said.

Channel Earth is the first direct-satellite-link channel devoted exclusively to serving farmers, ranchers, and other rural residents. It is estimated that a quarter of DirecTV's more than three million subscribers live in rural areas.

MILK
AMERICA'S HEALTH KICK